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SUBJECT: STATEMENT BY TIMOR-LESTE PRESIDENT RAMOS-HORTA ON U.S.  
ELECTIONS

¶1. On November 4, the Office of Timor-Leste President Ramos-Horta released the following statement on the U.S. Presidential elections.

¶2. Begin text:

President of the Republic and Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, Josi Ramos-Horta, congratulated today the president-elect of the United States, Barack Obama, and the American people for the historical election of an Afro-American from a humble background to hold office as President of the United States.

President Ramos-Horta said:

The election of Senator Barack Obama is a turning point in American history as it shows that American society has moved away from the racial discrimination and exclusion of the past.

For Afro-Americans and Africans in general, sons and daughters of slaves, the election of Barack Obama is the triumph of freedom and justice, the end of centuries of indignities and humiliation, the liberation of all humanity.

President-elect Barack Obama is a man of outstanding qualities both as a human being and a statesman and I believe he will be a president of the historical stature of a John F. Kennedy, successfully confronting the challenges facing the United States and the world in our time.

While it is obvious that the new American president has to address as a matter of urgency the financial catastrophe provoked by greed, incompetence and irresponsibility of American corporate CEO's, it is also fundamental that the United States leads the fight against extreme poverty by increasing aid to developing countries, opening up its internal markets and ending agriculture subsidies, as I have stated on a number of occasions.

At the same time, on foreign policy I hope that the new American administration will immediately lift the trade embargo and sanctions on Cuba. The 40 year economic blockade and trade embargo by the world's superpower against a small island-nation is immoral and politically unwise as it does not forge peaceful changes. The new President must take serious steps to accelerate the resolution of the Palestinian conflict leading to a permanent and viable Palestinian state within the framework of a two-state solution agreed upon by all parties concerned.

The new American president must realize that the era of American and European supremacy is over and should take steps to build a new and stable international framework by inviting China, India, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Brazil, Mexico to join the G8 and by leading the process of reform of the United Nations that would include the expansion of the Security Council with new permanent members such as India, Indonesia and Japan, for Asia, Egypt and South Africa, for Africa, and Brazil and Mexico, for the Americas. These are crucial tests for the new president of the United States.

To president elect Barack Obama, his wife Michelle, their children and the rest of his family and close friends I extend my warm congratulations. I also congratulate the American people for this historical event.

Also, my congratulations to Senator John McCain for his courageous fight as well his integrity and humanity.

End text.

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